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Gather Around for Breakfast

It's Merry Christmas Time

by Marjory Vaughn

AT CHRISTMAS, one of the happiest times of the year, we share joy, good cheer and kindness with others. It is then that we like to gather friends about us, talk over old times and renew acquaintances. The family is together again. Oh, it is a busy, bustling holiday, crowded with barely time to get everything in.

Old friends come home at holiday time. How nice it would be to entertain. An old custom is Christmas breakfast served at high noon. This get-together time is wedged in between morning duties and the afternoon's social activities. It can be any day in the week before or after Dec. 25; it can be just as informal as the hostess desires. The motto for hospitality should be—"Gather around—it's Merry Christmas time!"

A festive air developed by clever effects with china and linen can be relied upon as a background for the Christmas breakfast. One long table seems more informal, although several small ones can be used to advantage. A soft green damask cloth, accented with a center piece of silvered pine cones, evergreen sprigs and holly in a low silver bowl suits the holiday season. Ruby glassware and snow white napkins add their bit.

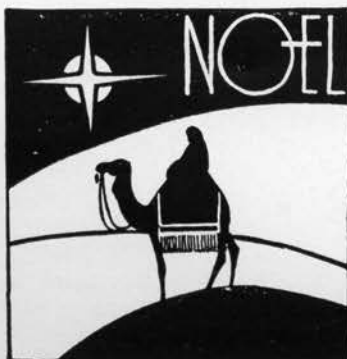
Now the menu:

Cranberry Juice Cocktail	
Individual Oyster Pies	
Boiled Potatoes with Parsley and Pimento Butter	
Green Peas	Cheese Stuffed Celery
Nut Rolls	Butter
Cherry Ice	Poinsetta Cakes
	Coffee

The sparkling color of the cocktail may be set off with crystal glasses on crystal plates. The cocktail is made by cooking 1 quart of cranberries in 1 quart of water until the berries are soft. If you are fond of spice, 2 or 3 cloves may be added during the cooking. The juice is strained and $\frac{2}{3}$ cup

of sugar is added. Boil 5 minutes. Chill thoroughly.

The second course is a picture of a combination of food designs. The individual oyster pies have 4 or 7 oysters, depending on size, placed in a shell of



uncooked pastry. Seasoning is added and the oysters are covered with sour cream before being placed in the oven. They are baked 20 or 30 minutes in a hot oven at 425°F. If sour cream is not poured over the pies first, they may be fixed and left in the refrigerator until baking time when the cream may be added.

The bland color of the pie may be offset by the colorful butter dressing used on the boiled potatoes. Chop the parsley and pimento quite fine and work into the softened butter. Put a generous portion on each hot cooked potato just before serving. The butter melts and the chopped ingredients flow out and over the potato.

The buttered peas are green mounds of luscious simplicity. A stick of cheese-stuffed celery on the plate gives a sharp enticing taste as well as an effective color contrast.

For the nut rolls, whole wheat flour

is substituted for one-half the white flour generally used. Roll the dough into a rectangular shape $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in thickness. Spread with softened butter, and sprinkle generously with crushed nuts. Roll tightly as for cinnamon rolls. Chill. A few minutes before time to put biscuits in oven, remove from refrigerator and slice into $\frac{3}{4}$ inch slices. Place on a baking sheet and allow to warm while the oven is heating. Bake 20 minutes in a hot oven 400°F.

The third course adds a needed piquancy with its cherry ice and poinsetta cakes. To make cherry ice, heat 2 cups of sugar and 3 cups of cherry juice and water to boiling. Cool this, then add 2 cups of chopped cherries, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of lemon juice, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of orange juice. Freeze in a 2 quart freezer until mushy, then add 2 beaten egg whites and finish freezing. This recipe will serve six. Two teaspoons of plain gelatine soaked in 2 tablespoons of cold water and dissolved in the hot cherry juice may be added if the ice is to be frozen in a mechanical refrigerator.

SQUARES of white loaf cake, frosted with white icing are the basis of the poinsetta cakes. On the top is placed 1 or 3 small poinsettias made of candied cherry petals and having mounds of chopped nuts for the centers. The dessert would not be complete without coffee.

The cherry ice might be served in crystal sherbets on green china or glass plates.

The food of the breakfast does not take a lot of preparation time, in fact it can be planned so that much of the preparation can be done the day before or early that morning. The hostess and her guests will find a restful background to chatting and laughter when they are at their physical and mental bests—breakfast at high noon.